

GOD, MAN AND THE HYDROGEN BOMB

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It is with a deep feeling of humility that I address myself to the subject of the day - God, Man and the Hydrogen Bomb. But man cannot escape coping with the harsh realities of international life. Man today spends more of the earth's resources, his wealth, and his genius on preparation for war and the ultimate destruction of human and religious values than he does on the creation of a living society based on the eternal religious principles of human brotherhood.

What the United States, for example, spends each week for military defense is what the federal aid to education program proposes to spend for one whole year, and is as much as is being planned to spend for public health for one whole year, or for rural electrification for one whole year.

We meet here today on Ash Wednesday. We, with the millions in Christendom, today enter the Lenten Season. ^{now} We begin the search into the recesses of our own souls; ^{now} we come to grips with the facts of our own human inadequacy; ^{now} we come to the ultimate realization that unless man prepares himself to commit an act of faith, he and his civilization may disintegrate.

On January 31st the President of the United States ordered the Hydrogen bomb built. On February 2nd a noble American, Senator Brien McMahon of Connecticut, Chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, made vivid for the American people the significance of the President's announcement. He challenged the world to turn from a path toward war and build for peace.

On February 4th a group of twelve of the country's leading physicists, warned that one hydrogen bomb could wipe out any city in the world and release such enormous masses of lethal radiation as to make the affected area forbidden to the habitation of human beings for perhaps centuries to come. They pleaded: "We believe that no nation has the right to use such a bomb no matter how righteous its cause. This bomb is no longer a weapon of war, but a means of extermination of whole populations. Its use would be a betrayal of all standards of morality and of Christian civilization itself."

On February 6th the Chairman of the Senate Armed Forces Committee, Senator Millard Tydings, declaring that "armies are not the answer to the settlement of international disputes", urged that the United States call an

international Conference for the specific purpose of achieving complete world disarmament.

On February 12th the world's leading scientist, Dr. Albert Einstein, stated that "the idea of achieving security through national armament is at the present state of military techniques a disastrous illusion ... radio active poisoning of the atmosphere and hence annihilation of any life on earth has been brought within the range of technical possibility."

The threat of physical destruction is obvious to all serious and informed persons. Whatever faith in inevitable progress which those of us, reared in the liberal tradition, may have had, is seriously shaken. Not only is the threat of physical disaster a grave one for the future of mankind, but the chronic threat of war, even without its advent, must inevitably create a state of perpetual crisis and resultant loss of human freedom. Fear can result in placing the control of man's destiny in the hands of just a few. Decisions, in such an atmosphere, must give special weight to the advice of those who specialize in violence. Under the stress of continuing war tension, the body politic may well transform itself into a garrison-prison state.

In much of the globe this process has gone far already. If the crisis continues, the process can appear in every country. Its success may call for no revolutionary seizure of power by totalitarian forces. The process has more in common with man's struggling in a bottomless bog.

The United States stands in 1950 at a high point of power. American strength is at present supreme from the Steetain-Trieste line and from Greece and Turkey westward to Southern Korea and Japan. Command of the seas and the possession of land and carrier based bombers which extend military might into the interior of continents, have created a sphere of power which no nation in history has ever approached. ^{IX} The hard truth, however, is that while America stands powerful, the idea of democracy which it represents is losing strength in the world.

In 1945 the hopes of the peoples ~~of the world~~ of the world were stirred when the United States put aside its traditional reluctance to play an active role in international organizations, and played host to the United Nations conference in San Francisco. The world looked to us, unscarred by the war, with our resources relatively untouched, and our factories in full production, to lead in a harmonious search for lasting peace. In Europe, in Asia, in Africa - wherever men gathered - people recalled the hopes of the Four Freedoms and the promises of the Atlantic Charter.

What has happened? Today, in the spirit of Lent, Americans seek an explanation and yearn for a solution. The fear and mistrust ~~of Russia~~ *in the world* that ~~exists in the United States~~ today is too obvious to need documentation. It is that which produces atomic and hydrogen bombs. Yet, in spite of possessing a stockpile of atomic bombs, and spending more than \$15 billions a year on military preparedness, many Americans are still insecure. Here ~~is~~ further justification for further self-analysis and inquiry into better ways of seeking security and peace.

It is true, as our Secretary of State recently noted, that continuous self-criticism is a quality of all free people. It is an excellent quality. It comes only from freedom, and, as he said, were its exercise permitted wherever men gather, the world would be much nearer peace.

How gratifying it would be were the citizens of the Soviet Union free to join with us in this Lenten season to explore our consciences, criticize our governments and join a world of free peoples in seeking a new approach toward our goal, ^{of} peace, world brotherhood and security.

Is it not our responsibility continuously and with preservice to hold forth to the peoples of the world this dream and our hope for its fulfillment? Who can say that our voices would not reach through the barrier and give hope and inspiration where despair and hostility now rest?

Let us not ignore the deep-rooted contradictions between democracy and totalitarianism of any form, whether it be Communist or Fascist. Let us never cease expressing our indignation toward slavery, nor our vigilance in behalf of freedom. So long as there is oppression or injustice or totalitarian power in the world, there is conflict. We must, however, lift conflict out of the realm of war.

Our responsibility is to tell the peoples of the world that we, temporarily the mightiest of nations, are ready to join in an international effort to abolish war. We must resolve to take some of the imaginative daring which we have shown in the physical sciences to start a chain reaction among the peoples and governments of the world against this madness and insanity.

Here lies our strength. With a positive reaffirmation of our democratic faith, with a determination to protect freedom and resist totalitarianism, with an unequivocal declaration in behalf of an international agreement to abolish war and for universal disarmament, America would gain for itself moral supremacy in the world, and recapture in the eyes of the world, leadership for peace.

The necessity for renewed and continued negotiation is greater than ever before. Not only peace but our national interest impels us to make new efforts to negotiate. Once America gives up her active search for peace we lose all hope of reaching the peoples behind the Iron Curtain; we lose our ties with friendly peoples who hope for peace but see our bombs and fear war; and, perhaps most important, we lose the basic moral purpose which is the fabric of our democratic way of life.

History offers many examples of mortal conflicts between great movements which, with the passing of the years and the cooling of passions, have found it possible to resolve their conflicts without war. The conflict between the Moslem and the Christian worlds was finally resolved by the destruction of neither, in spite of the Moslem slogan "Face Islam or die".

Perhaps an equally cogent example is the period of religious struggles of the sixteenth century. ~~It is difficult to say whether the hatred and suspicion revolving around the Communist movement today is any greater than that which existed between the Catholics and the Protestants of that period.~~ Yet, despite the apparent belief on ^{the part of both the P's and C's} ~~both sides~~ that there could be no peace until the other side was destroyed, the peace of Westphalia in 1648 ended the religious wars without a formal renunciation by either group to the keys of heaven.

Our first concrete proposal to the leaders of the Soviet Union must be to set up a conference on universal disarmament - universal not unilateral - with international guarantees of security. It is the responsibility of our heads of state to make unmistakably clear to the leaders of the Soviet Union our plans for such a positive proposal and issue an invitation that they join with us in submitting such a proposal to the United Nations.

We must also make it perfectly clear to the leaders of the Soviet Union that the alternative to peaceful negotiations and settlement could well mean turning the world into a battlefield which would make it the grave yard for the human race.

Our proposals for disarmament should include the absolute prohibition of the manufacture of weapons for mass destruction, limited not only to atomic and hydrogen bombs, but to conventional armaments as well. We should stand ready to consider practical suggestions as to how necessary supervision and control can be exercised. We should stand ready to turn over our own stockpiles of destruction to the United Nations as part of such an international agreement and in concert with all other nations of the world.

Significant as was the original Acheson-Lilienthal report from which the Baruch Plan was devised, we must stand ready to broaden it by extending its coverage to all weapons. Now is the time to re-examine our original proposals and recognize the need for modifying them in the light of developments since 1946.

Our disarmament proposal must also include with it a plea for universal abolition of peacetime conscription . It is unnecessary to train young men and women for war in a world society dedicated to peace.

Such a program to be effective must be accompanied by provisions for a police force to maintain international security. The United Nations must be transformed into an organization capable of enforcing peace under law.

Carrying the banner of such an international program, the United States will find itself in partnership with the entire non-Soviet world. With such a program we present the leaders of the Soviet Union with a challenge. It is a challenge not only to its military power but to its very purposes, which are the ultimate roots of its power.

We would be affirming our faith that in the conflict of ideologies between democracy and Communist totalitarianism, democracy will prevail and we would be proclaiming to the leaders of the Soviet Union "dare you affirm less for your faith in Communism?"

To strengthen our faith in democracy it must be an essential part of our international policy to enact a program for civil rights. Such a demonstration is essential if we are to convince the peoples of the world, particularly the millions in Asia and Africa, that we sincerely believe in democracy and human equality. It will be impossible for us to enlist the active support of the overwhelming numbers in the world who are colored and it will be impossible for us to gain their friendship so long as they come to equate American democracy with racial discrimination.

Our international policy must also encompass within it an economic program. President Truman's Point 4 Program must be the central focus of such an economic proposal. Our President, said, "We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas." It is essential that such a program be conducted through the United Nations and its specialized agencies. It must also encompass within it the vision of an inter-related world economy in which our government, as the wealthiest in the world, makes a substantial contribution in a joint international effort against the enemies of men -- hunger, misery, and despair.

With such a program, we demonstrate to the Russian people, and certainly to the peoples of Asia, Africa and Europe, our basic striving for peace, for understanding and for international justice. Let any government who refuses our offer then face the responsibility in the eyes of the peoples of the world for continuing the race of humanity toward destruction.

At this moment in history the helpless and teeming millions of people, citizens of the world, anxiously look for a declaration of American foreign policy which will provide them with the hope that war is not inevitable and that peace can indeed be a reality for them and their children. Having offered our willingness to join as partners in the struggle ~~and~~^{FOR} peace and against the real enemies of mankind - hunger and poverty - we would gain for ourselves the friendship and loyalty of all the peoples of the world.

Here is a moral alternative to world chaos.



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